

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DELAHUNT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

WAR ON TERROR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, in just a few short days, the American people will make a decision that will determine the future of our Nation for at least the next 4 years and maybe for the next four decades. We find ourselves in a situation where more and more Americans are losing their health insurance, more of our retirees are in fear that their retirement benefits will be reduced or eliminated, more of our young people are finding it increasingly difficult to afford a college education, more of our senior citizens are finding it impossible to buy the medicines they need, and, sadly, more and more of our American troops are losing their lives on a daily basis in Iraq and literally thousands of our troops have been and continue to be wounded in that war.

We find ourselves with the situation in Afghanistan where the Taliban is reconstituting its authority and power and we face the situation where long after our country was attacked by the terrorists, the mastermind of those attacks that took the lives of our citizens in New York and Pennsylvania and here at the Pentagon in Washington, the mastermind of that attack, of those attacks, Osama bin Laden, is still on the loose. We know not where he is. He is seldom mentioned. Yet the President claims that we are winning the war on terror when the major terrorist has not been apprehended and continues to be free to plan the next attack whenever or wherever that may occur.

The President spoke at the Republican Convention for 63 minutes, quite a long time, and yet he never once mentioned the name of Osama bin Laden. Osama bin Laden, the man who orchestrated the attacks upon our country. Osama bin Laden. Not Saddam Hussein but Osama bin Laden. It is almost as if the President has forgotten how to pronounce that name. I point this out for I think a very legitimate reason. As long as the person who was responsible for attacking our coun-

try is still on the loose, has not been apprehended, is it not reasonable to assume that the American people would conclude that we are still threatened by this man? That regardless of what we have been able to claim in Afghanistan, we have failed in the primary mission?

The President told us shortly after September 11 that Osama bin Laden could run but he could not hide. Those were the President's words. He can run but he cannot hide. The sad truth is that he ran and he has successfully hidden and this night he is somewhere planning the next attack. Symbolically, he is the hero to the terrorists. And as long as Osama bin Laden is on the loose, the terrorists can say they have not yet defeated us.

I get a little tired of hearing the rhetoric that is coming from the White House, that is coming from Secretary Rumsfeld and occasionally from Colin Powell, although he tends to be a little quieter about it. I get a little tired of hearing from Vice President DICK CHENEY that things are going well, that we are winning in Iraq. The fact is that much of Iraq is off limits to our soldiers. They are called no-go zones. Our soldiers cannot go there. Well, they can only go there if the Iraqi interim governmental leadership wants them to or says they should, and in those cases they may wander into those no-go zones. They tell us we are going to have elections in January. Yet with much of Iraq off limits, I wonder, and I think it is a legitimate question to ask, how can we have elections when we cannot even enter large cities in Iraq?

The President needs to come clean with the American people. He needs to tell us the truth. We are capable of dealing with the truth. We are not capable of dealing with misleading deceptions and what I consider manipulation and deceit on the part of this administration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. INSLEE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, it is easy to understand why President Bush and the Republicans have had such a hard time selling the Medicare law to the American people. Their Medicare law has more than its fair share of dirty laundry, as we can see from this chart. Cost estimates hidden

from Congress, the administration violated ethics laws, Members of Congress strong-armed to change their vote. We know this Medicare bill was passed in the middle of the night. The roll call was kept open an unprecedented 3 hours. One Member was literally bribed on the House floor, he claimed, the next day, or they attempted to bribe him on the House floor, a Republican leader attempting to bribe a Republican Member.

Seventy-eight different drug cards with no guarantee. Breaking the deal on drug reimportation which the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) will talk about in a moment. And the crowning point was that Medicare Part B premiums increased a record, 39-year history of Medicare record of 17.4 percent.

This bill had big problems from the start, from its passage, as I just pointed out, using threats and bullying to suppress an internal estimate, the middle-of-the-night vote, the bribery on the House floor. The administration then turned around, spending tens of millions of dollars on infomercial-style ads making Medicare almost look like an item for sale on the Home Shopping Network. That bad process, the middle-of-the-night, the bribery, the campaign contributions, the sleazy kind of tactics to get this bill passed, the expenditure of tax dollar money to sell a bad product to the American people, that whole process, that bad process resulted logically in a bad product.

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The drug benefit offers a part-time response to a full-time problem, requiring year-round premium payments for drug coverage that ends in August. And the Medicare law is confusing, handing seniors a stack of discount cards and saying if they cannot figure this out, here is an 800 number. The Medicare law does nothing to contain the skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs. Instead, instead, the Republicans and the President went out of their way to write the drug industry a blank check. No surprise there. This bill means \$180 billion, with a "b," in extra profits above and beyond what the drug companies' record profits already are, \$180 billion in extra profits for this drug bill; and, again no surprise, to complete the circle, the drug companies have given President Bush and Republicans in Congress tens of millions of dollars for their campaign.

We will hear more about these and other serious flaws in the Medicare law from the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) tonight, from the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL), and from the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND).

I want to get started by talking for a moment about the Bush Medicare premium hike. We heard about it. It was in the papers. Despite the Bush administration's efforts to keep it as quiet as possible, they released the information about the biggest Medicare hike in history, a 17.4 percent premium hike.